

May 2, 2023

The regular meeting of the Millcreek Township Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, May 2, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the Millcreek Township Municipal Building, 3608 West 26th Street. Planning Commission members present, Chairman Mr. Gene Strohmeyer, Messrs. Fugate, Kubeja, Prozan, Sitter, Skellie, Stewart, and Reade. Also, present were Matthew Puz, Zoning & Development Officer, Julie Maggio, Assistant Zoning & Development Officer, Matthew Waldinger, Director of Planning & Development, and Attorney Jennifer Hirneisen, Counsel for Township.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Mr. Strohmeyer.

At this time, Mr. Strohmeyer informed the public that the Planning Commission proceedings were streamed live online and are accessible at <https://www.millcreektownship.com/meetings>.

Following the Salute to the Flag, a motion was made by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Sitter, and carried that the Minutes of the Meeting of April 4, 2023, be approved.

The following Subdivision Land Developments were heard:

SUBDIVISION PLAN #2 FOR ROBERT W. & ELISE E. SESLER. Small Subdivision Plan. A subdivision plan to show the creation of a 0.356-acre, Parcel B, from 4058 W Ridge Rd (tax parcel ID 33-044-229.0-38.00) become an integral part of 4042 W Ridge Rd (tax parcel ID 33-044-229.0-039.00) creating a 0.805-acre lot with a residual lot of 0.236 acres, along the north line of West Ridge Road, west of Colonial Avenue, in Tract 309. **Index 406-012 & 013**

Mike Sanford, Sanford Surveying & Engineering, 4721 Atlantic Ave, spoke on behalf of this petition. He stated that the Seslers own two tax lots and would like to make a side lot addition, making one lot bigger and one lot smaller. The reason for the larger lot is for a land development presented later tonight.

There were no other public comments.

After discussion, it was moved by Mr. Skellie, seconded by Mr. Sitter, and carried 7-0 to recommend approval of the petition to the Board of Supervisors with the following:

Requirement:

- Parcel B, from 4058 W Ridge Rd (tax parcel ID 33-044-229.0-38.00) become an integral part of 4042 W Ridge Rd (tax parcel ID 33-044-229.0-039.00)

LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR BJ'S RESTAURANT AND BREWHOUSE. Land Development Plan. A land development plan to show the construction of a 7,662 square foot eating and drinking establishment located at the Millcreek Mall (tax parcel ID 33-167-667.0-046.03) with associated stormwater management facilities and off-street parking along the west line of Peach Street, south of Kuntz Road, in Tract 347. **Index 750-020**

Michael Takacs, Bohler Engineering, 1 Allegheny Square, spoke on behalf of this petition. He stated they were here to propose a redevelopment of the previous Sears Automotive building next to Sonic located at the Millcreek Mall. The proposed redevelopment was BJ's Restaurant and Brewhouse and the property would be leased. BJ's Restaurant and Brewhouse would have interior circulation, a shared driveway with Sonic, outdoor seating patio, pavement parking, landscape parking islands, underground stormwater with underground chambers, public water, and public sanitary sewer. This parcel sat lower than Peach Street and had numerous easements in the front but provided landscaping outside of the easements. There would be a service yard at the back which includes a screened wall along the side of it (where loading and unloading would take place). He presented a slide show of the architectural aspect of the restaurant which included all views of the proposed with a silo (facing the Millcreek Mall) that would add to the theme of the restaurant and would not function as one.

Mr. Strohmeyer asked if access was from the Millcreek Mall parking lot. Mr. Takacs replied that was correct. Mr. Strohmeyer questioned Buffer C. Mr. Takacs replied that there would be screening and tree planting just further back because of the easements. Mr. Strohmeyer informed Mr. Takacs that fire hydrant information needed to be provided on the mylar with the distance. Mr. Strohmeyer asked if they had discussed the parking spaces with the Township. Mr. Takacs replied that the ordinance has a maximum parking requirement of 92 spaces. Currently, they have 109 parking spaces inside the leased area for this restaurant. He noted from an operational standpoint, BJ's Restaurant and Brewhouse have 150 parking spaces on a daily basis, and they would be comfortable with parking from the rest of the mall. However, those parking spaces would not be the most conducive to the restaurant's operation. They were still requesting the 109 parking spaces and would be submitting a zoning variance to allow for those parking spaces. He believed that the intent of the ordinance was to reduce the impervious area. He believed that even if the 17 additional parking spaces would remain, they would still meet the intent of the ordinance concerning the impervious area, especially now that this site is 100% impervious inside the lease area.

Mr. Skellie asked Mr. Takacs if he knew what the percent of the open space was because the Township had a 7% requirement for any parking lot development over ½ acre. Mr. Takacs replied he did not know the exact percentage but believed that the reduction was 12% of the entire site so they would meet the 7%. He noted that landscaping was very important to BJ's Restaurant identity. Mr. Skellie informed Mr. Takacs that the Township would need the calculation. He also asked about the sidewalks on Peach Street and would like to have them considered even though they were leasing the property. Mr. Takacs explained about the easements and PennDOT.

Mr. Fugate stated that he understood that from looking at the state highway perspective they did not want sidewalks. However, this was a commercial area. Sidewalks would help flow and safety. He understood that when redevelopment/development takes place, you have to find a middle ground for placement of the sidewalk and maybe the owners need to consider sidewalks along Peach Street. The Supervisors should consider sidewalks as the area develops or redevelops.

Mr. Strohmeyer asked if there were sidewalks down the access road of the redevelopment. Mr. Takacs replied no there was not a sidewalk.

Mr. Sitter commented on the parking spaces and if they had to limit the parking spaces to 92 spaces. He informed Mr. Takacs that Erie was used to having to park across the street and there were many restaurants where there was not enough parking, and the patron would park in the Boscov parking lot and walk across.

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Mr. Reade complimented the presentation Mr. Takacs made with the visual concept of the physical building.

There were no other public comments.

After discussion, it was moved by Mr. Skellie, seconded by Mr. Fugate, and carried 7-0 to recommend approval of the petition to the Board of Supervisors with the following:

Condition:

- Provide the 7% requirement for green space.

They asked if the Supervisors would consider sidewalks along Peach Street for the Millcreek Mall property.

LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR WEST RIDGE ESTATES – PHASE 2. Land Development Plan. A land development plan to show the construction of a two five-unit apartment buildings at 4042 West Ridge Road (tax Parcel ID 33-044-229.0-039.00) with associated stormwater management facilities and off-street parking along the north line of West Ridge Road, west of Colonial Avenue, in Tract 309. **Index 406-012 & 013**

Mike Sanford, Sanford Surveying & Engineering, 4721 Atlantic Ave, spoke on behalf of this petition. He stated that the development had a single-family home on it and they would like to construct two five-unit apartment buildings on the property, totaling 11 units on the property. They submitted a new driveway permit to PennDOT which had been approved. The stormwater calculations have been submitted to the Township. They will have public sewer and water with all appropriate landscaping from Buffer C and B. They show a sidewalk on the plan along West Ridge Road but have asked for a deferral.

Mr. Strohmeyer reminded Mr. Sanford that this development would be contingent upon the subdivision approval. Mr. Sanford responded that would be correct.

There were no other public comments.

After discussion, it was moved by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Prozan, and carried 7-0 to recommend approval of the petition to the Board of Supervisors.

LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR DOLLAR GENERAL. Land Development Plan. A land development plan to show the construction of a 10,640 square foot retail business establishment (tax Parcel ID 33-080-417.0-003.14) with associated stormwater management facilities and off-street parking along the south line of West 38th Street and the intersection of Atlantic Avenue, in Tract 76. **Index 363-009**

Mike Sanford, Sanford Surveying & Engineering, 4721 Atlantic Ave, spoke on behalf of this petition. He stated that this development was for a Dollar General on the out parcel of West 38th Street. There would be no new driveway. The existing drive would be utilized. There was a considerable grade fall on this property from south to north. Therefore, two retaining walls were proposed on the northern and eastern side. Buffer C was included along the frontage and side lines as indicated on the drawing, stormwater calculations have been submitted to the Township, and no variance they did request a sidewalk deferral.

Mr. Skellie asked what the percentage of open space was for this development. Mr. Sanford responded that the parking lot was .4 acres and therefore, under .5 acres and was not required to have the 7% requirement. They do have a perimeter of green space and the endcap plantings as well.

There were no other public comments.

After discussion, it was moved by Mr. Sitter, seconded by Mr. Kubeja, and carried 7-0 to recommend approval of the petition to the Board of Supervisors.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned on motion by Mr. Kubeja, seconded by Mr. Sitter, and carried unanimously at 6:12 PM.

Doug Prozan
Secretary