

TOWNSHIP OF WHITEHALL  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

February 21, 2024

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**PLANNING COMMISSION**

Jonathan L. Bolton, Chairman  
Robin Ruhmel, Vice Chairman  
Paul Geissinger, Secretary  
Jason Szewczak, Member  
Ann Freyman, Member

**TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL**

Lee A. Rackus, Bureau Chief of Planning,  
Zoning & Development - Absent  
Frank Clark, Keystone Consulting Engineers  
Jack Gross, Esq., Township Solicitor

Meeting called to order at approximately 7:30 pm.

Mr. Bolton read the Fair Housing Statement as required.

**A) SUBMISSION REVIEW:**

**1) PLANNING COMMISSION REORGANIZATION**

Acting Chairman Bolton made a motion to elect a new Chairman for the Planning Commission. Ms. Ruhmel nominated Mr. Bolton, second by Ms. Freyman. Mr. Szewczak polled the Commission. Vote taken, 4-0 to approve with 1 abstention, motion granted. Mr. Szewczak notified the Commission of his intention to resign as Secretary. Chairman Bolton made a motion to nominate a new Secretary. Mr. Szewczak nominated Mr. Geissinger, second by Ms. Ruhmel, motion carried 4-0 with 1 abstention. Chairman Bolton entertained a motion to nominate a new Vice Chairman, Mr. Geissinger nominated Ms. Ruhmel, second by Mr. Szewczak. motion carried 4-0, with 1 abstention.

**2) INDEX #2035-24A – 3434/3435 N. FRONT STREET APARTMENTS**

3434-3435 N. Front Street  
Land Development  
Zoning District: R-5A  
Original Submission Date: 1/22/24  
90-Day Expiration: 5/21/24

Gene Dieter & Andrew Bennett, from Pennoni representing the applicant.

Mr. Bolton confirmed the applicant received comment letters from Ms. Rackus dated 2/20/24 and Mr. Clark dated 2/21/24.

Ms. Rackus questioned if the applicant had made a submission to the LVPC yet, which they had not.

Mr. Geissinger expressed his concern with the intersection and the needed addition of a stop sign. The applicant expressed their willingness to pay for the stop sign if it's necessary. Mr. Clark indicated pedestrian traffic increases in the warmer months, with people heading to the Rail Trail, and he will see if he can get that information added to the request for a stop sign.

Ms. Ruhmel questioned the applicant's request for sidewalk deferral, which would mean the residents of the apartments building would need to walk in the street, or cross to get to the sidewalk.

Atty. Gross suggested putting an easement on the building lot side, so that lot has the right to use 17 parking spots, permanently restricting that lot for the use of the apartment building. This would prevent the sale of that lot for a use other than parking for the apartment. Ms. Ruhmel confirmed that in the future, if the lot was sold, the new owner could not charge apartment residents for those parking spots, which was confirmed. Mr. Clark also suggested adding signage to indicate that the parking lot is restricted to apartment use only.

Mr. Bolton entertained a motion for preliminary approval with the following conditions:

1. They receive feedback from LVPC before going to the BOC
2. Installation of signage restricting the parking lot for apartment use only
3. Notation on the plan for easement of the parking lot
4. Additional crosswalk if sidewalk deferral is granted
5. Applicant will pay for stop sign if approved

Motion by Mr. Geissinger second by Mr. Szewczak. Vote taken 5-0 to approve.

Mr. Bolton entertained a motion for final approval with the conditions above.

Motion by Mr. Geissinger, second by Ms. Ruhmel. Vote taken 5-0 to approve.

3) **INDEX #2032-23A – WHITEHALL TOWNHOMES**

3229 N. Front Street  
Major Subdivision/Land Development  
Zoning District: R-5A  
Original Submission Date: 11/30/23  
90-Day Expiration: 3/20/24; Extension Expiration: 5/20/24

4) **INDEX #2034-23A – FULLERTON TERMINALS, LLC**

2451 Main Street  
Major Subdivision  
Zoning District:  
Original Submission Date: 12/27/23  
90-Day Expiration: 4/17/24

B) **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**Comprehensive Plan Update**

Ms. Rackus stated the Township is embarking on a Comprehensive Plan update, which she expected to be a 2-year process. She believes the Planning Commission is the best group to handle this and will work on a request for proposal (RFP). All paperwork will be pushed out to the Committee, and they can move forward with securing a consultant and working on a new plan.

Mr. Bolton entertained a motion for the Planning Commission to volunteer to be the Committee for the Comprehensive Plan update. Motion by Mr. Szewczak, second Ms. Ruhmel, vote taken 5-0 to approve.

**Sidewalk & Curb Deferral**

Mr. Geissinger questioned the status of the Ordinance for the Planning Commission to review Sidewalk & Curb Deferrals. Ms. Rackus stated they waited for the new elected officials to be in place before sending it to the BOC, then to Legal & Legislative (L&L). Atty. Gross stated it was discussed at length in L&L and is being 'held over' until next month. It will be on the March L&L agenda.

C) OTHER:

Approval of January 2024 Meeting Minutes, minutes approved.

Mr. Bolton wanted to publicly thank Rob Piligian for his time and service on the Planning Commission.

D) ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 pm.