

**TOWNSHIP OF FALLS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
JANUARY 23, 2024**

Meeting commenced: 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned: 7:50 p.m.

Members present: Brian Binney, John Haney, Colin Henderson, Daniel Everett, Paul Hartzel (alt)
Jesse O'Brien (non-voting member)

Members absent: Mary Leszczuk

Also Present Representing:

Danja Tract, 110 Central Ave – Michael Meginniss, Esq (Beglin, Carlin & Mandio); Eric Clase, P.E. (Gilmore & Associates); Tony DiSandro (owner of Danja)

Corco Chemical, 299 Cedar Lane-- Michael Meginniss, Esq (Beglin, Carlin & Mandio); Heath Dumack, P.E. (Dumack Engineering)

Sunbelt Forest Products, 400 Rock Run Rd – Scott Mill (Landscape Architect, Van Cleef Engineering) and Matt Ross (Maintenance Supervisor, Sunbelt Forest Products)

For the Township: Douglas Waite, P.E. (Jones Engineering), Diane Beri (Recording Secretary)

REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

Chairman:	John Haney
Vice Chairman:	Colin Henderson
Secretary:	Brian Binney
Assistant Secretary:	Daniel Everett
Date and Time:	4 th Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Chairman Haney begins by stating application #3 (Steven and Floyd Speranza) has requested to be tabled until the February meeting.

Item #1: DANJA Tract, 110 Central Avenue, Fairless Hills, PA 19030; TMP #13-005-022; 13-005-022-001; 13-005-022-022; 13-005-112; 13-005-116; 13-005-138; 13-005-140 to 147; 13-005-174 to 177; 13-005-202; 13-005-207; 13-005-208; Zoned: HC; Owner: DANJA LLC. Waiver of Land Development – allocation of space for lease area

Atty. Meginniss presents the application and states this is an allocation of space submitted on behalf of Danja LLC. The site plan indicates there are a large amount of “movie lots” which comprise a portion of the property Danja owns. There is paper street (Rome Street) which has been unopened for years. The far right of the site plan is the lease area where we want to lease to one tenant. This tenant has been operating at that location for over one year. The property is zoned HC (Highway Commercial). We received a zoning variance for the use of long-haul trucking in December for the tenant with the condition of no junk storage vehicles being stored. Assuming this is approved for an allocation of space, this will be only for one tenant, not multiple tenants. There are approximately 35 trucks. Many go offsite for a week at a time. No development is proposed. We have no objection to formally vacating Rome Street (the paper street) if necessary.

Eric Clase, P.E. presents an overview of the site plan. There is an existing business on site (CVA) which has always stored trailers on the property. He shows where on the site plan the lease area for Danja is proposed.

Atty. Meginniss said that CVA has operated on all the lots, but one of the lots did not belong to Mr. DiSandro. They went through a quiet title process to acquire that 2,000 sq. ft. parcel so they now own all the land.

Member Binney asks if there will be one lease.

Atty. Meginniss states yes.

Member Binney asks what sized vehicles will be coming in and out.

Mr. Clase responds they are 18-wheelers.

Member Binney expresses concern over Spencer Street being adequate for that sized vehicle and the huge area which is wetlands margins that is occupied by the lease, but on the plan it says zero wetlands margins will be disturbed.

Discussion occurs on this point.

Member Henderson questions the number of vehicles coming in and out.

Mr. DiSandro says it varies – right now there may be ten; sometimes it could be 35 (around the holidays).

Atty. Meginniss says the review letter issued by Jones Engineering are all will comply, and we will agree to a condition to have the approval based on having one tenant only within the lease area.

Member Henderson makes a motion to recommend approval for a Waiver of Land Development for Danja, 110 Central Avenue, Fairless Hills, PA based on the recommendations in Jones Engineering Associates letter of November 21, 2023, the Fire Marshal and Traffic Engineering comments, with the condition there will only be a single tenant in the lease area.

Member Hartzel seconds the motion.

All in favor 5-0. Motion carries. APPROVED FOR WAIVER OF LAND DEVELOPMENT

Item #2: Corco Chemical Corporation, 299 Cedar Lane, Fairless Hills, PA 19030; TMP #13-013-013-001; Zoned: HI-A; Owner: Corco Chemical Corporation. Minor Subdivision – divide existing lot into two lots

Michael Meginniss, Esquire, presents the application and states this is a minor subdivision application for the Corco property. By way of background, Corco property submitted a minor subdivision application a few years back which was not viewed favorably by the Planning Commission. The primary concern was the subdivision would create a small, elongated Astrip (“the stem”) which would not be able to be developed without numerous zoning variances. We have tried to come up with a better and more permanent solution than the first subdivision attempt. What we have now is a better design than the current existing condition and the former plan. The solution was to take “the stem” and convey it to KPK who owns the large piece behind Corco. The result is Lot 1 is the Corco developed piece, “the stem” parcel goes to KPK, and Lot 2 which is undeveloped. Lot 2 does have some challenges in the event it is developed because of the existing floodplain. We also went to the Zoning Hearing Board to facilitate the subdivision for impervious surface early in 2023.

All waivers we are requesting relate to the fact we are not proposing any improvements at this time.

Member Binney says note 8 on the plan says there is no public water available. There is a water line which runs down that road. There is a fire hydrant across the street.

Jones Engineering Associates Review Letter dated January 17, 2024

All items are a will comply, except:

- 191-39(G) Requesting a waiver to not install sidewalks along street frontage
- 191-48(A) Requesting a waiver to not provide street streets along lot frontages
- 191-48(H) Requesting a waiver from providing buffer yard plantings
- 191-51(C) Requesting a waiver relating to the intended development
- 191-61 Requesting a waiver from providing sidewalk along Cedar Lane
- 191-62 Requesting a waiver from providing curbs along Cedar Lane

Atty. Meginniss states the waivers are for the lot subdivision and would be revised should Lot 2 be developed.

Member Henderson makes a motion to recommend approval of the Minor Subdivision application of Corco Chemical, 299 Cedar Lane, Fairless Hills, TMP #13-013-013-00, based on Jones Engineering Associates review letter dated January 17, 2024, with waiver requests for 191-39(G), 191-48(A), 191-48(H), 191-51(C), 191-61, and 191-62, Bucks County Planning Commission letter, and any comments from the Fire Marshal.

Member Everett seconds the motion.

All in favor 5-0. Motion carries. MINOR SUBDIVISION APPROVED

Item #4: Sunbelt Forest Products, 400 Rock Run Road, Fairless Hills, PA 19030; TMP #13-028-062-003; Zoned: PIP; Owner: UFP Real Estate LLC. Sketch Plan – Construction of a 95’ x 90’ addition, a 102’ x 82’ steel building and relocation of a 25’ x 12 tote storage area

Scott Mill presents the application and states there is a manufacturing use here with about 8 acres in size. He explains the site plan stating Rock Run Road is to the south which is a private road owned by Sunbelt Forest Products. They also own the land on the other side of the road where you can see a stone lay down area with some trailers. They pressure treat lumber and deliver it to retailers in the area. Many of the buildings on the property are sheds that provide shelter for lumber. The building in question is in the lower right-hand corner of the property. There is an existing building which has two sections to it. The left portion is 100’ x 100’ – we want to demolish it and rebuild it. On the other side of the existing building, between the outer edge of the building and the property line, the proposal would be to put an addition there which is about 90’ x 95’. This would need a variance related to a 20 ft. side yard setback; this addition would be 4 ft. from the property line. Sunbelt is attempting to modernize the facility. We also want to provide parking along the frontage to provide additional parking for when guests arrive.

The review letter from Jones Engineering Associates does note the variance request we need but not many other engineering comments because this is only a sketch plan. We may be seeking additional waivers when we submit for preliminary land development.

Member Binney says he would want some clarification on Rock Run Road – you state it’s a private road, but it is listed on the PennDOT liquid fuel tax for Falls Township.

Mr. Mill states it’s a private road at the end of the property line on down.

Member Binney questions the size of the buildings stating the square footage doesn’t match.

Mr. Mill says we are well under the building coverage.

Member Binney says he's surprised by that because of all the long buildings.

Matt Ross says all the long buildings are T-sheds where we just store the wood which has already been treated so they are completely open on all sides.

Member Binney asks Doug Waite (Twp. engineer) if they still meet the definition of a building?

Mr. Waite says for purposes of this plan and my calculations I included them as building coverage.

Member Binney asks how much of the property to the left Sunbelt Forest Products owns.

Mr. Ross says he's not sure where the property line is, but I did not include the private road or that piece in my calculations.

Mr. Ross explains the process and why they need the addition to stay in the same spot. Basically, the wood gets loaded into cylinders, gets treated and then comes out the other side – the sides are open – it's called a drip pad. When the wood comes out, it's wet and just drips dry. The way it works now is it has large metal rollers with huge chains. The new system is a tram that all the wood is loaded on one tram, the door is opened and a pneumatic cylinder pushes the tram in and then pulls the entire tram out. The expansion of this building would allow the drip pad to double in size thereby increasing capacity.

Chairman Haney says so the building needs to stay there because it's the start of the process.

Mr. Ross says that is correct.

Member O'Brien asks about the parking on Rock Run Road and the type of vehicles.

Mr. Ross says we have 25-30 employees. Any employee parking spaces displaced by the building addition for the drip pad would be relocated to the other side.

Chairman Haney asks if the modernization of your process would increase the number of employees.

Mr. Ross says the current plan is no, the current plan is to increase capacity so we could treat the amount of lumber that needs to come in. All the wood comes in on the rail line and then leaves on trailers. We load whatever the orders are for the day onto the trailers which are parked, and then the drivers come in and pick up their loads and then leave.

Member O'Brien asks if there will be any problem with the fire equipment being able to pass the cars and trailers to get to the rear of the property.

Mr. Ross says a fire truck can get into the rear as well as 18 wheelers.

Chairman Haney asks about the hydro system and how it is set up.

Mr. Ross says under the cylinder there are two concrete lines in the pit. We have a water line come in; we use public water to do the treatment. We mix it with several chemicals. Everything that comes off the drip pad is graded to go into the pit area and then pumped back into the system. Everything gets reused.

Member Everett asks if there are trailers every day leaving the site.

Mr. Ross says Mondays through Fridays there are trailers leaving the site. In the off season, it's less which is about 10 to 20 loads a day, and in the high season there will be 30 to 50 loads a day. With the modernization, we will have less because we will be able to treat all the wood ourselves.

Member Henderson asks where on the property you store the chemicals used to treat.

Mr. Ross says where the new building will be there is a tote storage room – we have the 100-gallon totes. There are three chemicals we use and one of them is salt water. The other two are mild acids.

Member Binney asks about Rock Run Road and if it's two way (yes) and says he doesn't think two-way traffic of tractor trailers would work on 18 feet wide road. Two trucks cannot pass each other if you have cars parked there.

Mr. Mill says provisions could be made so that if they know a truck is coming in, they will hold an outbound truck so that they don't have to pass.

Discussion occurs on the parking and relocation of parking spaces.

Member Binney also states he would be opposed to a four ft. setback line but given the fact that immediately adjacent to that is a stormwater retention pond, I am concerned because there is no room to actually do grading for stormwater management. All the water is draining directly into your neighbor's property. Four feet is not a lot of room to maintain it. I would prefer to make the setback larger.

Mr. Ross says if we could make the setback longer we would, but the tram system going in does not allow it.

Chairman Haney says you are trying to retrofit in an existing area.

Mr. Ross says correct.

No further discussion. As this is a Sketch Plan, no vote was taken.

Item #5 Approval of Minutes

Minutes of November 28, 2023 approved

Meeting adjourned 7:50 p.m.