

**TOWNSHIP OF FALLS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
JULY 26, 2016**

Meeting commenced: 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned: 7:45 p.m.

Members present: Binney, Hammer, Haney, Perry

Members absent: Goulet, Rittler [T. Miles has resigned]

Also present: Christopher Fazio, P.E., Douglas Hopper, P.E., Sara Miller (Remington, Vernick & Beach) and Jared Murphy, Intern Architect (Kimmel Bogrette) representing the Township of Falls

For the Township: Joseph G. Jones, P.E. (T&M Associates); Tom Bennett, CCEO & Zoning Officer; Ed Neubauer, Code Enforcement Officer

Item #1: Township of Falls, 188 Lincoln Highway, Fairless Hills, PA 19030; TMP #13-005-003; Zoned: IN Preliminary Land Development – Falls Township Municipal Complex

Christopher Fazio, P.E., presents the application. We would like to give you a presentation on the land development plans. We have had several meetings with T&M Associates which have been very productive. We have received their review letter. We have generated a response with it that everything will be a will comply, which we have handed in this evening.

Jared Murphy continues with the presentation. I am on the design team with John Trump who is the registered architect on the project. We are proposing two different separate buildings – the municipal building and the public works facility for the garage and maintenance. We are proposing a three story building which will house administration, tax collector, police functions, and public meeting room. There will be some tenant space as well. The ground floor will have police functions for detaining, storage, sally port storage for vehicles. Moving up will be tax collection, offices, locker rooms for the police and investigators as well as additional tenant space that will be delivered at a later time. Moving up we will have the public meeting room as well as a multi-function space, some other office functions for Township business. That’s the general rundown of the municipal building.

Regarding the public works facility, we have garage and maintenance space for Township vehicles as well as storage of other Township maintenance items as well. It will be a one-story structure, showing about seven different garage bays, and some space for the public works employees as well.

Aesthetically, we wanted to pay homage to the industrial feel of the area from what we have gathered from speaking with people in the area. The building we are proposing is a large gestural piece, something that would mimic a quartz and steel look to pay homage to that old kind of steel industry. For initial colors, we believe it to be an attractive building with lots of glazing, lots of natural light as well. The public meeting room is front and center and it clearly delineates between administration and police. As you enter the site, it is very clear compared to the current building.

Douglas Hopper continues with the presentation. We are going to build this in three phases. Phase 1 will construct the administration / police building and the public works building; the existing building will stay up until the new building is done. Phase 2 will move everyone from the existing building to the new building and then demo the existing building. Phase 3 will be the remainder of the site work. Major components of the site – we are fronted on Lincoln Highway. The existing light and the existing entrance are maintained. The existing driveway will be cut during Phase 1, build a portion of it during Phase 1, and completed when the old building comes down. You will have parking in the main area of the site. There are 211 proposed spaces associated with the administration and

police building and 17 in the lot for the public works building. The Township ordinance calls for significantly more parking than our proposal, but that's what we can fit on the site.

Chairman Binney asks how many of those parking spaces are restricted.

Mr. Hopper states in the back is police parking, the public parking is in the front.

Chairman Binney states that out of the 211, how many are actually available to the public.

Mr. Hopper states he will get that information to the Chairman.

Mr. Hopper states that the main entrance will be in the front, the police entrance in the back, with the sally port in the back. The existing buildings for public works are staying and there is a proposed pole barn as well. There is also an entrance off of Lincoln Circle that will be strictly for police. That will help in the phasing process as well. During Phase 1, when the building is built and the old one is being torn down, we can reopen the entrance at Lincoln Highway.

Chairman Binney asks if it is specified somewhere as to where the public works vehicles and the backhoes will be parked.

Mr. Hopper states that the existing lot is going to stay as is – we are going to mill and overlay it. This will be for employee parking for the public works personnel and the back area will be similar to what it is now.

Mr. Hopper continues that we are reducing impervious by a half an acre from what it is now. However, because of the stormwater district we are in, we do have to reduce peaks somewhat. In order to handle stormwater management, we are proposing a basin in the front. Everything on the front side of the administration building and the driveway and the public works will be tied into this basin and eventually drain down to the existing swale at the southeast corner of the site. We will have an impound area and a dog run area, a dumpster location, sally port, future pole barn.

Mr. Hopper states in response to Chairman Binney's question on how many public parking spaces are available – the answer is 112 public spaces.

Chairman Binney asks if there is sufficient parking for the police during change of shifts.

Mr. Hopper states as far as they know, there is. We maximized that as much as we could.

Chairman Binney states that one of the things he noticed is that there is a lot of stormwater that is bypassing the new basin that is dumping directly into this little ditch. Everything on the maintenance yard from the public works that is flowing towards the salt shed is all bypassing the new basin and dumping into that little creek.

Mr. Hopper states that there is an existing basin here at the end of the paved area.

Chairman Binney states that basin is collecting the water from the development next door [Mercer Court]. I remember when they came in, they were using that basin. I have concerns about that. I also noticed that all the building downspouts are directly bypassing the new basin and going directly into that ditch.

Mr. Hopper states that they are working with T&M for a better solution to that. All the roof drainage is piped directly out, but there is that area here that drains along the back property line – we are going to look at slowing that down so we may have to reconfigure some of these site components.

Chairman Binney states that the basin you have is 9 feet deep. I don't know any place around here where you dig 9 feet and don't hit water. Have you done testing to find out where the water is located underground?

Mr. Hopper states that they do have borings. Of course, we can't do them where the existing building is, but there were borings done along various sections. Based on those borings, we are above bedrock and the groundwater table.

T&M Associates' Review Letter dated July 21, 2016

All items are a will comply, with the exception of the following:

Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

- 191-37 (B) Requesting a waiver – curbing in all proposed parking facilities and 15 ft open space between curblines of any uncovered parking area and outside wall of any building
- 191-37(C) Requesting a waiver – two-way drive aisle within parking areas to be minimum width of 25 ft. (proposed is 24 ft.)
- 191-37(E) Requesting a waiver – minimum curb radius of 5 ft. for all curblines within parking area
- 191-37(G)(1) Requesting a waiver – curbed raised planting beds where parking rows exceed 20 spaces
- 191-37(G)(2) Requesting a waiver – shade trees to be planted in curbed raised planting beds (only 1 area affected)
- 191-37(G)(4) Requesting a waiver – shade trees throughout parking area
- 191-78(C)(2) Requesting a partial waiver, subject to adequate information for Township's engineer review.

Chairman Binney asks with regard to Mr. Hopper's comment that they will provide the service letters from the appropriate authority for water and sewer, if the new building requires any additional EDUs.

Mr. Murphy states that he is unsure but they will double check.

Chairman Binney states that when he is looking at the grading for the maintenance yard, as it drains towards the salt dome, it appears that the water runs right into the front door of the salt dome. What is going to prevent any salt that is spilled or any salt that is in the dome from being washed away into the ditch or the neighbor's yard?

Mr. Hopper asks if it's a problem now.

Chairman Binney states he doesn't know.

Mr. Hopper states that the intent was not to change the grading back there. We were just going to mill and overlay the existing lot.

Chairman Binney states that the current grading has some swales that direct the water around the salt dome. The sheaf flow that you are proposing looks like it is going right into the front door.

Mr. Hopper says it is existing contours; we are not actually changing the grading.

Chairman Binney states that the plans he is looking at shows that the grading is changing. You are changing the flow.

Mr. Jones states that the grading you show on the plan doesn't really represent an overlay; you have some cuts in there.

Mr. Hopper states that they will take another look at the grading back there.

Chairman Binney asks if they have seen the July 26, 2016 Fire Marshal's letter and provides Mr. Hopper a copy for his review.

Mr. Hopper, after reading the letter, states that they will comply with the Fire Marshal's comments.

Member Hammer asks what the square footage of the existing building is. Are we going up in size or staying the same?

Mr. Murphy states he does not have the exact numbers, but states that he believes there will be a substantial increase in square footage in comparison with the old building.

Mr. Jones says that you had mentioned previously that you did the best you could with the parking spots. His suggestion for the next step is that you consult with the various departments to find out how many spaces they need and match that up on the plan with the requirement.

Member Haney says that he reached out to one of the sergeants who said that 20 spots is a little too small. In a perfect world, they have three on a power shift and then 9 people on shift and that doesn't include the other staffers, lieutenants or some of the other sergeants that work both shifts. They also have county drug cars as well.

Chairman Binney states that he is good with the majority of the plan, but he does have some reservations about the stormwater management. I know this area in the back has had flooding problems. I am concerned about dumping the stormwater from the lower parking areas directly into the ditch and bypassing the basin. If we could do something to slow that down, I would feel better.

Mr. Bennett states his concern is that there are no handicapped accessible parking spaces for the lower level entrance where the police go in.

Member Perry makes a motion to recommend approval of Preliminary Land Development of Falls Township Municipal Building, TMP #13-005-003, based on T&M Associates' letter dated July 21, 2016, with waivers requested for Sections 191-37(B), 191-37(C), 191-37(E), 191-37(G)(2), 191-37(G)(4), and a partial waiver of 191-78(C)(2) and 191-78(C)(6) and based on the Falls Township Fire Marshal's letter of July 26, 2016.

Member Hammer seconds the motion.

All in favor 4-0. APPROVED FOR PRELIMINARY LAND DEVELOPMENT

Item #2: Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve June 28, 2016 minutes.

All in favor 3-0 (Member Haney abstaining)
