Voorhees Township Environmental Commission Minutes November 13, 2018

The Chairperson called the meeting to order. It was stated that this meeting is being held in compliance with the “Open Public Meetings Act and has been duly published and noticed as required by law”.

FLAG SALUTE

ROLL CALL

Present: Mrs. Brown, Mr. Rashatwar, Mrs. Schwartz, Mr. Pike, Mr. Khayati, Mr. Gaffney Mr. Hale

Absent: Mr.Sytnik

Mr. Joseph Giddings, CME Consultant also present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Rashatwar makes a motion to approve the minutes and Mrs. Schwartz seconds the motion. Roll call votes are taken for the following minutes:

January 9, 2018 (Mr. Rashatwar & Mr. Pike abstain)

Ayes: Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Schwartz, Mr. Gaffney, Mr. Khayati and Mr. Hale

Nay: None

June 12, 2018 (Mr. Gaffney abstains)

Ayes: Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Schwartz, Mr. Pike and Mr. Hale

Nay: None

September 11, 2018 (Mrs. Brown &Mr. Gaffney abstain)

Ayes: Mr. Rashatwar, Mrs. Schwartz, Mr. Pike, Mr. Khayati and Mr. Hale

Nay: None

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Laura D’Allesandro from Del Duca Lewis Law Firm presents the application for Lidl US,LLC. Mr. Ben Crowder, from Bohler Engineering, NJ LLC was also in attendance. The application presented is for a 25,656 sq.ft. Italian Grocery Store located at 73 NJSH 73 & Lafayette Avenue. (The original application had been submitted to Voorhees Township in 2017 but the building size and footprint have decreased significantly since then.)

Mr. Crowder explains that the project encompasses 15 acres with the Route 73 jurisdiction falling to NJDOT and the Lafayette Avenue being under the control of Camden County. He states that both jurisdictions caused a delay in the application process due to approvals needed to erect a light at Route 73 and Lafayette Avenue. Mr. Crowder explains that there are a few constraints on the property, one of which being a 120 ft. wide PSE&G electrical distribution easement. This will not hinder the development of the Lidl project but will be of concern when the additional lot is developed. The western portion of the property is primarily wooded and undeveloped. They will be using the existing footings and foundation and there is a small pocket of Wetlands to the rear of the property. Mr. Crowder advised the Commission that an LOI was returned on 10/23/18 by the NJDEP and the findings confirmed an intermediate pocket of wetlands. There will be no disturbance of the wetlands or the 50 foot repairing buffer. He explains that the storm water basin is oversized, as it appears on the site plan, because the existing basin handles the Route 73 run-off. The undeveloped remaining lot will be developed in the future by the owner of the property and therefore requiring a large basin to handle the existing Route 73 run-off and the new construction. Lidl will enter into an agreement with the other land owner to potentially handle the storm water runoff, some of which may need to be moved underground. There will be 120 parking spaces, a proposed traffic signal at the corner of Route 73 & Lafayette Avenue and additional Route 73 landscape improvements with pedestrian connectivity to the Lidl grocery store.

Mr. Hale then asked Mr. Crowder to review Mr. Giddings updated Environmental Review dated 11/8/18. Mr. Hale directs the Commission to #1 of the review that discusses Township Ordnance 154.006(E) and the topic of Tree Removal and Compensatory Planting. Mr. Crowder explains that in the absence of the 136 trees being cleared for construction, the applicant has agreed to provide off-site compensatory plantings and/or provide monetary funds to the Tree Compensation Fund. He then states that the diameter of the smallest inventoried tree is 5 inches and the majority of them are between 5-12 inches.

Mr. Hale then references #1 of the NJDEP Regulations and asks if an LOI has been submitted. Mr. Crowder explains that the interpretation was received on October 23, 2018 and will be provided to Mr. Giddings for review. Mr. Giddings requested a report assuring that the basin meets the separation requirements regarding the seasonal high water table. Mr. Rashatwar agrees that this report would be beneficial to the project and Mr. Crowder agree to the submission.

Mrs. Brown asks Mr. Crowder if the basin they are planning will require State DOT approval since it is part of the drainage system for Route 73. Mr. Crowder explains that the basin and their calculations will be under state review because of the connectivity. Mr. Hale asks what the current impervious coverage percentage is and what is proposed. Mr. Crowder explained that the proposed coverage will be 68.2% and that they will need a variance since 60% is the allowed maximum. Mr. Hale states that they will be improving the impervious coverage in the long run and Mr. Crowder agrees. Mr. Gaffney and Mrs. Brown were concerned with the lot line going down the middle of the adjacent property and Mr. Crowder explained that the subdivision line is placed where it is with the assumption that there will eventually be a double bay parking. He further explains that the over development is so the Lidl parking lot will not be disturbed during the Phase II. Miss D’Allesandro explains that the development is (2) separate applicants and that the current ownership is in agreement with the proposed application.

Mrs. Brown asks the engineer why the projected plan is graded the way it appears on the plans referencing C-9. Mr. Crowder explains that they didn’t want to impact the 50 foot wetland buffer and that it’s based on a volume calculation in relation to the basin. Mrs. Brown further points out that they plans call for a “super silk fence”. She asks the applicants if they would be willing to in addition to that, use orange snow fencing as an additional visual barrier. Mr. Crowder references C-4 on the plans where it calls for, TPF, also known as Tree Protection Fencing which is also known as Orange Snow Fencing. He also states that the existing septic will be removed and that there are no wells on site. The applicant also explains that they have a maintenance schedule to designate mowing and maintenance of the stormwater basin in place, as part of an agreement between Lidl and Close Realty.

The question of tree replacement is discussed and Miss D’Allesandro confirms that the applicant will either replace the removed trees or make monetary contributions to the tree fund. Mr. Rashatwar asks whether the tree plantings can be established at the north end of the property? Mr. Crowder explains that the trees cannot be planted in that area due to the PSE&G easement.

Seeing no public, Mr. Hale forgoes the public portion.

The Commission suggests a Memo be drafted and sent to the Planning Board stating that the applicant agrees to comply with every request suggested in the consultant’s letter dated 11/8/18. Mr. Hale asks for a motion to approve the letter. Mr. Rashatwar makes a motion, and Mr. Khayati seconds the motion. All Commission members in attendance are in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Brown explains that the state is sponsoring a Seedling Giveaway and that applications are required to be submitted by 12/14/18. She explains that it would be a good opportunity to join the Green Team and distribute the seedlings. Mr. Hale suggests a memo be constructed and sent to Mr. Spellman asking for permission to apply to the program. All members of the VEC are in agreement.

Seeing no further business Mr. Hale adorns the meeting.

VEC Secretary

**Kendralyn Cornwall**