

March 6, 2019

The Plymouth Township Planning Agency held a public meeting at the Plymouth Township Building on Wednesday, March 6, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The following were present:

Vince Frangiosa	Chairman
Vernon Harper	Member
Monica McCullough	Member
Tom Parkin	Member
Anthony Stipa, Jr.	Vice-Chairman
Greg Sudell	Recording Secretary
Mike McGuire	Absent
Lonnie Manai	Engineer – Woodrow & Associates
Dave Conroy	Zoning Officer

PREIT Services, LLC

Mr. Frangiosa stated that this is an application for a Variance from the Plymouth Township Zoning Ordinance No. 342, as amended, Article XI, Section 1101.A. The Variance requested is as follows: To construct two buildings 18.1' apart where 50' separation is required. The property is located at 500 W. Germantown Pike in a "Shopping Center" Zoning District.

Mark Gambill, Vice President of development was present this evening on behalf of PREIT Services.

Mr. Gambill stated that one of the aspects of the redevelopment of the Plymouth Meeting Mall is the creation of the out parcel on the ring road. Dick's Sporting Goods, Burlington, Michael's and Miller's Ale House are being added and a row of shops. The applicant is seeking a Variance as noted.

PREIT would prefer to place the buildings side by side but Shake Shack is being constructed and the applicant does not want to be attached and a patio will be added. PREIT is working with First Watch as another restaurant for the out parcel.

First Watch is a restaurant that primarily serves breakfast and lunch and will not be needing a patio.

Mr. Gambill stated that PREIT does not believe that there are health, safety or fire code issues involved with separating the two buildings. In addition, it is not contrary to public interest. If PREIT can't put the two restaurants together, it will end up with one restaurant.

There will be ample parking associated with the restaurants.

Putting the restaurants together with ample space will not be an injustice. Putting the restaurants 50' apart will create an unnecessary hardship.

The Zoning Hearing Board will consider the congestion of public streets and public safety. Mr. Gambill does not believe that these aspects apply to the request. There is a limited amount of space to place these buildings and the area is inviting.

A rain garden will be created to hold the water that is generated by the out parcel.

A question was asked as to what the elevation was from Germantown Pike up to that site. Mr. Gambill advised that it is twelve feet.

Mr. Gambill stated that PREIT is requesting that the Planning Agency recommend the request for a Variance to the Zoning Hearing Board.

Mr. Manai asked if there was any other place on the interior of the building to construct the restaurants 50' apart. Mr. Gambill replied that there is a limited amount of space to build.

Mr. Manai asked how many parking spaces are being lost because of the build out. Mr. Gambill advised that he is not exactly sure. Most likely about seven. Mr. Manai stated that the plan outlines that seventy spaces will be lost. Mr. Manai asked what kind of calculations has PREIT come up with to show that the site and the Mall in general are in compliance with the Township Zoning Ordinance with regard to parking.

Mr. Conroy mentioned the parking lot calculations. He explained that these were outlined in prior staff meetings with Bohler Engineering. Mr. Gambill advised that a representative from Bohler Engineering will come to the Zoning Hearing Board meeting to explain the calculations. Mr. Gambill will also put something in writing to explain these.

Mr. Gambill stated that PREIT will actually be adding parking, not taking it away.

Mr. Manai asked if there will be a place for trash disposal. Mr. Gambill stated that there will be dumpsters.

There will be two handicap parking spaces installed.

There will be no cross easements.

There will be separate utilities for each restaurant being proposed.

Mr. Sudell express concerns with who will maintain the patio. If there is more than one tenant an agreement will have to be made as to who maintains it.

Ms. McCullough stated that the plan shows a net loss of parking spaces. This will need to be reviewed and the drawing does not appear to be accurate. Mr. Gambill stated that this will be corrected prior to PREIT coming before the Zoning Hearing Board.

Mr. Stipa asked if the parcel will be subdivided. Mr. Gambill stated that the intent now is to not

subdivide it.

Mr. Stipa stated that PREIT is approaching the maximum building coverage for the parcel. He believes the plan to be too congested.

Mr. Frangiosa expressed concerns with the patio that will be located at Shake Shack. He stated that there will be one equitable owner but the patio is not closed off. There may be use of the patio from other restaurants. Something would need to be enforced so that it is only used by Shake Shack.

Mr. Frangiosa stated that foot traffic in this region is a concern and it can be extremely dangerous. The construction of Shake Shack will only increase this. Pathways and striping are needed to contain this traffic. PennDOT may need to do something on Germantown Pike. Mr. Frangiosa believes that the problem will become more pronounced.

Mr. Frangiosa asked about the parcel located below Whole Foods and whether this is part of the Plymouth Meeting Mall property. Mr. Gambill advised that it is. PREIT may want to develop this into multi-family use in the future. It is not conducive to putting restaurants at this site.

A question was asked about the Redstone Restaurant and its next door neighbor. The restaurant is located 75' away. The Township enforces rules and regulations for a reason.

Mr. Frangiosa stated that the request has not been reviewed for fire and safety yet.

Mr. Conroy stated that if there is no fire hydrant located within 600' that one will need to be installed. This is a land development issue.

Mr. Frangiosa stated that there are several issues to be considered and these include parking, striping, traffic, Fire Marshal review and the closeness of the buildings. The recent fire at Redstone Restaurant also needs to be considered.

Mr. Frangiosa stated that pathways may need to be striped that connect to the Mall at some point.


Mr. Frangiosa advised that the Planning Agency is an advisory board and that PREIT is still allowed to proceed further with their request.

Mr. Sudell made a motion to deny the request for the variance to construct two building 18.1' apart where 50' separation is required. The motion was seconded by Tom Parkin and passed 5-1 with Mr. Frangiosa, Mr. Harper, Mr. Parkin, Mr. Stipa and Mr. Sudell in favor. Ms. McCullough was opposed to the motion and Mr. McGuire was absent.

The February minutes were approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted


Mary Beth Jamison
Recording Secretary

Plymouth Township Planning Agency
March 6, 2019

To: Zoning Hearing Board

Subject: PREIT Services, LLC

Mr. Sudell made a motion to deny the request for the variance to construct two buildings 18.1' apart where 50' separation is required. The property is located at 500 W. Germantown Pike in a "Shopping Center" Zoning District. The motion was seconded by Tom Parkin and passed 5-1 with Mr. Frangiosa, Mr. Harper, Mr. Parkin, Mr. Stipa and Mr. Sudell in favor. Ms. McCullough was opposed to the motion and Mr. McGuire was absent.

Very Truly Yours,

Mary Beth Jamison
Planning Agency Secretary