

C: COUNCIL
5-074

MAY 21, 2012

The Plymouth Township Zoning Board held a public meeting at the Plymouth Township Building on Monday, May 21, 2012.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

The following were present:

Vincent Frangiosa	Chairman
Robert Esposito	Vice Chairman
James Saring	Member
Michael Mattioni	Member
Robert Sassi	Member
Susan Piette	Solicitor
David Conroy	Zoning Officer
Paula Meszaros	Court Reporter



The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Ms. Piette advised that Plymouth Industrial Center is seeking a 1 year extension for their special exception granted 7-18-11. Member Saring made a motion that an extension be granted to Plymouth Industrial Center until 7-18-13. Member Esposito seconded the motion. Members Saring, Esposito, Sassi, Mattioni, and Frangiosa voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed by the vote of 5-0.

The Board heard the following:

JAMES C. SARING AND LILLIAN A. COLLETTI: On an application for Variances from Plymouth Township Zoning Ordinance No. 342, as amended, Article V, Sections 502.F and 502.G.

The Variances requested are as follows: To increase the impervious coverage on property to 28.03% where a maximum of 25% is permitted. To decrease the green space coverage on property to 71.97% where a minimum of 75% is permitted.

The property is located at 46 Terrace Road in "A" Residential Zoning District.

Member Saring recused himself from this application because he is the applicant.

Mr. James Saring was sworn-in to testify.

Mr. Saring advised that he is seeking to construct a patio in the back of his property. Mr. Saring stated that presently he is a bit over the required impervious after constructing his

garage and resurfacing his driveway last year. Mr. Saring advised that curbing was put in to control the run off going to his neighbor's property.

Mr. Saring advised that he is seeking the relief for impervious coverage and green space coverage. Mr. Saring stated that his 13' by 21' patio would be attached to the back of his garage. Mr. Saring advised that his neighbors are in favor of the proposal, and many residents in the neighborhood have a similar patio.

Member Mattioni asked if there is no room to sit outside without the patio. Mr. Saring advised that there is just a small patio in the front, and that sits only a few people.

Member Esposito inquired about the type of construction. Mr. Saring advised that it will be 4 inch concrete. Mr. Saring stated that he may have a retractable awning on top of the patio.

There were no questions from the audience. There was no testimony for or against the applicant from the audience.

The Board discussed and decided as follows:

JAMES C. SARING AND LILLIAN A. COLLETTI: Member Esposito made a motion that the Variances requested be approved. Member Mattioni seconded the motion. Members Esposito, Mattioni, Sassi, and Frangiosa voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed by the vote of 4-0.

SEAN AND JOANNE MCMANUS: On an application for Special Exception from Plymouth Township Zoning Ordinance No. 342, as amended, Article VII, Section 702-F.

The Variance requested is as follows: To increase the impervious coverage on property to 39.36% where a maximum of 35% is permitted. To decrease the green space coverage on property to 60.64%, where a minimum of 65% is permitted.

The property is located at 106 Shasta Road in "C" Residential Zoning District.

Mr. Sean McManus was sworn-in to testify.

Mr. McManus advised that he and his wife are looking to put a pool in their back yard. Mr. McManus stated that his wife has MS, and the pool will be used for her therapy.

Mr. McManus advised that they would go over the allowable impervious surface by about 4%. Mr. McManus stated that his neighbors support the proposal.

Member Mattioni asked how many stories will the proposed addition be. Mr. McManus advised that it will be a one story addition.

Member Saring asked what is proposed for the addition. Mr. McManus advised that presently they would use it for a family room, but it may become a bedroom if someone has a problem getting upstairs in the future.

Member Esposito asked if the neighbors have been contacted. Mr. McManus advised that the neighbors were notified, and they support the proposal.

There were no questions from the audience. There was no testimony for or against the applicant from the audience.

The Board discussed and decided as follows:

SEAN AND JOANNE MCMANUS: Member Esposito made a motion that the Variance requested be approved. Member Mattioni seconded the motion. Members Esposito, Mattioni, Sassi, Saring, and Frangiosa voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed by the vote of 5-0.

IMS HEALTH, INC./PLYMOUTH PARK DFC, LLC: On an application for Variance from Plymouth Township Zoning Ordinance No. 342, as amended, Article XIV, Section 1400.

The Variance is as follows: To permit use of Lot 9 for proposed parking lot.

The property is located at Lot 9 of Plymouth Meeting Park, Lee Drive in "Limited Industrial" Zoning District.

Craig Robert Lewis, Esq. was present to represent the applicant in presenting their application.

Mr. Lewis advised that the applicant seeks a variance for use. Mr. Lewis stated that this pertains to Lot #9 of the Plymouth Meeting Park. Mr. Lewis advised that relief has already been granted for a hotel on Lot #3.

Mr. Lewis advised that an existing building sits on Lot #4 and Lot #5. Mr. Lewis stated that this building is owned by Exeter Properties. Mr. Lewis stated that this building is now occupied by IMS Health.

Mr. Lewis advised that primary access for Plymouth Meeting Park is Gallagher and Gravers Roads. Mr. Lewis stated that the Park is near the PA Turnpike. Mr. Lewis advised that the spur of road located off of Davis Drive is now known as IMS Drive.

Mr. Lewis advised that SDI Health had leased into the building on Lot #4 for approximately 118,000 square feet. Mr. Lewis stated that SDI had 300 employees working at the building.

Mr. Lewis advised that in early 2012 IMS sold their building in the Plymouth Meeting Executive Campus. Mr. Lewis stated that the employees were relocated to Collegeville. Mr. Lewis advised that IMS bought SDI, and now they desire to consolidate all employees at the building on Lot #4. Mr. Lewis stated that the parking is not currently sufficient for all of these employees.

Mr. Lewis advised that IMS proposes to take Lot #9, and make it into parking area. Mr. Lewis stated that this parking lot will serve the building on Lot #4. Mr. Lewis advised that Lot #4 and Lot #5 will remain independent because of a stream that cuts through the park. Mr. Lewis stated that IMS will use this parking only for their employees. Mr. Lewis advised that there will be 240 parking spaces. Mr. Lewis stated that the issue is the lack of a building on Lot #9. Mr. Lewis advised that overflow parking would only happen during off hours.

Mr. Michael Kissinger was sworn-in to testify.

Submitted for inclusion into the record were the following:

- A1) CV Of Michael Kissinger
- A2) Parking Plan (5-2-12)
- A3) Zoning Plan (4-24-12)

Mr. Kissinger advised that he is a professional engineer with Pennoni Associates. The Board accepted Mr. Kissinger as an expert in civil engineering.

Mr. Kissinger advised that he has prepared the plans submitted in Exhibits A2 and A3. Mr. Kissinger stated that Pennoni Associates did the engineering for Lot #3, Lot #4, and Lot #5. Mr. Kissinger advised that there are sidewalks along IMS Drive.

Mr. Kissinger advised that the 240 parking spaces will be compliant with the zoning code. Mr. Kissinger stated that spaces will be 9' by 18' with 24' aisles. Mr. Kissinger advised that the required landscaping and berming will be provided. Mr. Kissinger stated that the parking lot will serve the uses on Lot #4 and Lot #5.

Mr. Kissinger advised that he does not believe the parking lot will be a detriment to public safety and welfare. Mr. Kissinger stated that the character of the neighborhood will not be altered with the proposed parking lot going in. Mr. Kissinger advised that the Plymouth Township Planning Agency recommended in favor of the proposal.

Mr. Robert Sichelstiel was sworn-in to testify.

Mr. Sichelstiel advised that he is employed by Pennmart, the owner of Plymouth Meeting Park. Mr. Sichelstiel stated that the owner has authorized IMS to file the application before the Zoning Board.

Member Mattioni inquired about the total number of parking spaces among all of the

properties in Plymouth Meeting Park. Mr. Lewis advised that there will be about 810 parking spaces on the properties. Member Mattioni asked how many total employees will be in the buildings. Mr. Lewis stated that there will be about 1200 employees, however these employees will not be on site at the same time.

Member Mattioni asked about the business that IMS does. Mr. Lewis advised that IMS deals with IT solutions for the health care industry. Member Mattioni inquired about the hours of operation. Mr. Lewis stated that this will generally be 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, and possibly an alternative shift from 5:30 PM to 8:30 AM.

Member Saring asked if there are going to be any other uses on Lot #9 besides parking. Mr. Lewis advised that only parking will exist on this lot. Mr. Lewis stated that stormwater management is already on site.

Member Saring asked if there will be traffic control stop signs to help the increased traffic as more development in the park takes place. Mr. Lewis advised that striping can take place for direction. Mr. Lewis stated that the proposed paving will be reviewed by the Township Engineer and the Township Traffic Engineer.

Member Esposito commented that the traffic situation must be reviewed by the Township authorities for safety concerns.

Chairman Frangiosa stated that he does not believe that the lot can be for overflow with the hotel. Chairman Frangiosa noted that conferences can only be held at the hotel if the participants are at the hotel. Mr. Lewis advised that the hotel does have ordinance compliant parking. Mr. Lewis stated that overflow would only happen if 2 people are sharing every room in the hotel.

Member Sassi asked what is the distance between the furthest parking space to the actual building. Mr. Kissinger advised that this would be about 200 to 300 feet. Member Sassi asked if there would be lighting in the parking lot. Mr. Kissinger stated that the applicant will comply with the Township Ordinance concerning lighting in the parking lot.

There were no questions from the audience. There was no testimony for or against the applicant from the audience.

The Board discussed and decided as follows:

IMS HEALTH, INC./PLYMOUTH PARK DFC,LLC: Member Saring made a motion that the Variance requested be approved subject to the following:

- 1) Striping be done for the crossing at IMS Lane for pedestrians to cross.
- 2) Compliance to the Township Ordinances, and the recommendations of the Township Consultants.
- 3) Strike the hotel from use of the overflow lot.

Member Sassi seconded the motion. Members Saring, Sassi, Mattioni, Esposito, and Frangiosa voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed by the vote of 5-0.

SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (SEPTA):
On an application for a Special Exception and Variances from Plymouth Township Zoning Ordinance No. 342, as amended, Article XVI, Sections 1602.3.A(1); 1602.3.B, 1602.3.E, 1604.C.3, 1604.C.4, 1602.3.D, 1602.D, 1602.D(1)(2), 1602.2.I(2)(3), 1602.2.H, 1602.2.1(4)(b).

The Special Exception and Variances requested are as follows: To permit two (2) Changeable LED billboards, both 1,200 square feet, where 135 square feet is permitted, and at heights of 100 and 105 feet, where 35 feet is permitted.

The Applicant also seeks to challenge the substantive validity of the Plymouth Township Zoning Ordinance of 1960. More specifically, the Applicant seeks to challenge the requirement that, pursuant to Section 1602.3.A(1), no billboard sign may exceed 135 square feet in area. The Applicant further seeks to challenge Section 1602.3.B whereby the height of any proposed billboard cannot exceed 35 feet. Furthermore, the Applicant further seeks to challenge the requirement pursuant to Section 1602.3.D that no two billboard signs may be located within 1,500 feet from each other.

The property is located on a site adjacent to Ross Street and the Pennsylvania Turnpike in a "Limited Industrial" and "Heavy Industrial" Zoning Districts.

Robert Kerns, Esq. was present to represent the applicant in presenting their application.

Mr. Kerns advised that Septa is seeking to place 2 billboards on opposite sides of the Turnpike. Mr. Kerns stated that the Septa properties for placement of the signs have no other viable use. Mr. Kerns advised that Block 18 Lot 16 and Block 22 Lot 21 are two properties being used.

Mr. Kerns advised that the applicant has withdrawn their validity variance request, and also the request for height has been withdrawn. Mr. Kerns stated that the applicant has worked out issues with Plymouth Township Council, and no longer seek these reliefs.

Mr. Kerns advised that the 2 variances are sought for the 2 billboards on 2 unrelated properties. Mr. Kerns stated that both signs would be illuminated. Mr. Kerns advised that the applicant seeks relief to allow the images on the sign to change more frequently. Mr. Kerns advised that one sign is in Limited Industrial, and the other sign is in Heavy Industrial.

Submitted for inclusion into the record were the following:

A1) Scott Lopert - CV

- A2) Site Photographs
- A3) Site Plan
- A4) DVD
- A5) Michael Tantala – CV
- A6) Study Of Relationship Between Digital Billboard And Traffic Safety; Tantala Associates
- A7) Examination Of Relationship Between Digital Billboards And Traffic Safety in Reading, Pennsylvania; Tantala Associates

Mr. Francis Kelly was sworn-in to testify.

Mr. Kelly advised that he is Assistant General Manager for Septa concerning public and government affairs.

Mr. Kelly advised that in 2007 the State passed Act 44 which is funding for public transportation. Mr. Kelly stated that the government desires transportation companies to think of alternate sources of revenue. Mr. Kelly advised that this revenue reduces the subsidies that the County must supply the Transportation Authority.

Mr. Kelly advised that the applicant is trying to make partnerships as they offer their services. Mr. Kelly stated that the applicant has spoken to Plymouth Township Council on how to improve services and reduce costs.

Mr. Kelly advised that the proposed use for billboards is the only use that can be possibly used for the properties in question. Mr. Kelly stated that Septa has naming rights in many locations, and the proposed billboard use will help with revenue. Mr. Kelly advised that Septa provides 1.1 million people rides on public transportation each day, and Septa wants to increase alternate revenue in order to keep the costs down for the customers.

Mr. Scott Lopert was sworn-in to testify.

Mr. Lopert advised that he is a Professional Land Surveyor with Alaimo Group. The Board accepted Mr. Lopert as an expert in land surveying.

Mr. Lopert advised that the two properties in question are located in separate zoning districts, however they are both located where the Turnpike crosses the Septa Rail Tracks. Mr. Lopert stated that the properties are surrounded by PECO property on the east and south sides. Mr. Lopert advised that the Sewage Authority is to the north, and the river is to the west.

Mr. Lopert advised that the properties have very limited use because of the cliff area that exists near the railroad tracks. Mr. Lopert stated that 14' by 48' signs are now proposed for the properties. Mr. Lopert advised that the sizes were reduced after discussion with Plymouth Township Council.

Mr. Lopert advised that there is nothing really near where the signs are proposed to be

placed. Mr. Lopert stated that the nearest structure is part of the Treatment Facility, and this is about 395 feet away.

Mr. Lopert advised that the railroad tracks have to travel on flat ground. Mr. Lopert stated that hills had to be cut into so that the tracks could go through, and this is the reason that there is much drop off area to the left of the Turnpike. Mr. Lopert advised that both proposed signs will be put in areas that have rocky cliffs and heavy vegetation.

Mr. Lopert advised that the northern most sign will be the most visible. Mr. Lopert stated that the sign to the south will not impact anything. Mr. Lopert advised that the photos submitted indicate that the signs are not fully visible from the residential areas. Mr. Lopert stated that the billboards even at full power are less bright than even the clouds.

Mr. Lopert advised that there are restrictions concerning what can go on the signs. Mr. Lopert stated that these restrictions apply to all Septa advertising. Mr. Lopert advised that the video and photos show the signs being brighter than what they actually are. Mr. Lopert stated that signs will be less bright to the human eyes, and the signs will not be very bright at night.

Member Saring asked if the sign in Ft. Washington along the Turnpike is owned by Septa. Mr. Kerns advised that it is uncertain concerning the ownership of this sign, however the same technology will be used on the proposed signs.

Mr. Lopert advised that the applicant proposes to construct 2 double face billboard signs. Mr. Lopert stated that these signs will be visible to the traffic along the Turnpike. Mr. Lopert advised that all four faces will have digital LED signage with changeable messages which will change every 8 seconds.

Mr. Lopert advised that each sign face will measure 672 square feet. Mr. Lopert stated that the height for each sign will be 34 feet above the road. Mr. Lopert advised that LED billboards will operate 24 hours 7 days a week. Mr. Lopert stated that he believes there will be very little impact on the surrounding communities from the billboards.

Mr. Lopert advised that the billboard will be equipped with a light monitor that will automatically adjust the brightness of the billboard based on sunlight. Mr. Lopert stated that this is based on federal guidelines concerning ambient light. Mr. Lopert advised that the lights from the billboards can only be 1/3 brighter than the ambient light. Mr. Lopert stated that LED lights generate the light source itself.

Mr. Lopert advised that the billboards will have a 6 foot arm that will stick out. Mr. Lopert stated that this arm will have a camera that will face the billboard at all times. Mr. Lopert advised that a person monitors this arm, and if anything goes wrong with the billboard this person will immediately know that there is a problem.

Mr. Lopert advised that there are similar billboards located in Upper Merion Township and Whitmarsh Township. Mr. Lopert stated that PennDOT allows billboards up to 1,200

square feet, and billboards are allowed to be placed within 500 feet of one another.

Mr. Lopert advised that the applicant feels that 672 square foot signs are appropriate because of the area where they are going to be placed. Mr. Lopert stated that the signs are being placed in an isolated area. Mr. Lopert advised that a smaller sign would not be appropriate because drivers at 65 miles per hour would have to look at the sign longer.

Mr. Lopert advised that the 8 second message gives the drivers the time to comprehend the message. Mr. Lopert stated that a 1 second or 2 second message would be a distraction to the drivers.

Mr. Lopert advised that the variance requested should be granted because the illumination from the sign must compete with the sun. Mr. Lopert stated that the sun must be overpowered. Mr. Lopert advised that the sign will monitor the existing surroundings, and will adjust the brightness to what is necessary.

Mr. Lopert advised that it is proposed that the signs be within 1,500 feet of one another. Mr. Lopert stated that for the signs to be viable they must be on a high traffic area. Mr. Lopert advised that there are no other appropriate uses for the properties in question.

Mr. Lopert advised that the applicant is seeking a more frequent change for the signs than 2 times an hour. Mr. Lopert stated that industry standards dictate a 7 or 8 second change on signs for traffic passing by on a super highway. Mr. Lopert advised that Penndot itself dictates a 5 second change.

Mr. Lopert advised that the variance relief will have no adverse affect on traffic, utilities, and park and recreation. Mr. Lopert stated that the proposal will not essentially change the character of the area. Mr. Lopert advised that the proposal will not be a detriment to health, safety, and welfare.

Member Mattioni asked Mr. Lopert if he is not an engineer. Mr. Lopert advised that this is correct. Member Mattioni asked Mr. Lopert on what basis are made for the statements concerning the size of the signs and the changing of the images. Mr. Lopert stated that he has been working with Mr. Richard Alaimo who is the head engineer for this project.

Member Mattioni asked how far will the sign on the southern side be from the road surface. Mr. Lopert advised that this sign will be 70 feet away. Member Mattioni asked if the sign will be close enough to be seen from this distance. Mr. Lopert stated that there will be enough visibility for traffic, and the sign should not be a distraction.

Member Esposito asked if the messages on the 2 signs will be synchronized with the same message as a driver goes by. Mr. Lopert advised that there will be 2 different messages. Member Esposito expressed concern that drivers will be distracted twice.

Chairman Frangiosa expressed concern on how nearby residents and residents living up on the hills will be affected by the applicant's proposal. Chairman Frangiosa stated that the

residents must not be affected by the lights coming from the signs in the evening. Mr. Lopert advised that a study was done to make sure residents are not affected by light. Mr. Lopert stated that a luminosity map is submitted to indicate how light will be contained.

Submitted for inclusion into the record was the following:

A8) Relative Luminosity Map

Mr. Lopert advised that the map (A8) indicates certain percentages of brightness. Mr. Lopert stated that the more you are away from the sign the less brightness comes about. Mr. Lopert advised that the residential areas are a distance away, and therefore the brightness will not affect their neighborhoods.

Chairman Frangiosa expressed concern that residents will still be able to see the top of the sign through the foliage. Mr. Lopert advised that the top of the sign can be seen. Mr. Lopert stated that because of the angle and distance the lights will not have an impact on the residential area.

Member Saring asked if the applicant went to Sandy Hill Road to see if the light from the sign could affect this area. Mr. Lopert advised that they went to Sandy Hill Road, and the location in question did not seem visible through the trees on Sandy Hill Road.

Member Saring asked if there is an estimation on how many houses will be able to see the sign. Mr. Lopert advised that a count of the houses was not taken.

Member Esposito asked what happens when the arm in the sign indicates a malfunction. Mr. Lopert advised that the indicator from the arm is shut off remotely, and then the maintenance will take place.

Ms. Piette asked if a driver would see 4 images. Mr. Lopert advised that the driver would see 2 images. Ms. Piette asked if the driver would see 4 images because the 2 messages are not synchronized. Mr. Kerns stated that another witness will have testimony concerning this issue.

Member Saring asked if the proposed Lafayette Street Extension has been factored in, and the visibility of the proposed signs to this extension. Mr. Lopert advised that this extension was not factored into the study for the proposed signs.

Ms. Piette asked if there will be no phasing for the signage. Mr. Lopert advised that there will be no phasing because the images will be solid pictures on the signs. Mr. Lopert stated that there will be no video or animation.

Mr. Piette asked if the height of the signs will be 19' above the highway, and 34' total. Mr. Lopert advised that the top of the sign will be 34' above the highway. Mr. Lopert stated that the total height will meet Ordinance requirements.

Ms. Piette asked if discussion took place with the Township Solicitor, Thomas Speers, concerning parameters. Mr. Kerns advised that this correspondence did take place. Ms. Piette advised that the 5-10-12 Letter for this correspondence should be put into the record.

Submitted for inclusion into the record was the following:

B1) 5-10-12 Letter (Thomas Speers-Robert Kerns)

Mr. James Manfredi was sworn-in to testify.

Mr. Manfredi advised that he is an Advertising Manager for Septa.

Mr. Manfredi advised that when a problem is signaled by the arm the sign can be fixed within 6 hours. Mr. Manfredi stated that each module in the sign has a direct link to the computer, and this will enable maintenance to be done quickly.

Mr. Manfredi advised that the signs will not be shooting different messages at the same time. Mr. Manfredi stated that the signs will be timed to give the same messages. Mr. Manfredi advised that all signs are managed from a computer system.

Member Esposito asked if the billboards will have the same message on the faces at the same time. Mr. Manfredi advised that he is uncertain as to this. Mr. Manfredi stated that these sign situations on both sides exist all along the PA Turnpike.

Mr. Michael Tantala was sworn-in to testify.

Mr. Tantala advised that he is a professional engineer. The Board accepted Mr. Tantala as an expert in traffic engineering.

Mr. Tantala advised that he has conducted studies concerning traffic safety relative to digital billboards. Mr. Tantala stated that he completed the Cleveland Study (Exhibit A6) in 2009. Mr. Tantala advised that the billboards in the Cleveland Area were studied to determine their traffic safety patterns.

Mr. Tantala advised that he conducted the Reading Study (Exhibit A7). Mr. Tantala stated that he presented this study to the Institute of Transportation Engineers. Mr. Tantala advised that an examination of digital billboards in relationship with traffic safety was conducted in Reading, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Tantala advised that the Federal Highway Administration has addressed traffic safety issues. Mr. Tantala stated that the findings of the Highway Administration are referenced in his studies. Mr. Tantala advised that details of accidents and areas of accidents are included in the study.

Mr. Tantala advised that it was found in the Cleveland Study that digital billboards with 8

second durations are safety neutral. Mr. Tantala stated that digital billboards are statistically not linked to traffic accidents.

Mr. Tantala advised that billboards in the Reading Study include many sizes. Mr. Tantala stated that the billboards are manufactured by Lamar Advertising and Land Displays. Mr. Tantala advised that this study found that the digital display signs with brightness control are safety neutral, and statistically not linked to traffic accidents.

Mr. Tantala advised that several Federal Studies have been done concerning digital billboards and traffic safety. Mr. Tantala stated that the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute completed a Human Factors Traffic Safety Study. Mr. Tantala advised that how long drivers glance at signs is reviewed in the study. Mr. Tantala stated that this study and other federal studies have determined that digital billboards pose little risk for accidents happening.

Mr. Tantala advised that it is his opinion that the proposed signs will not adversely impact the health, safety, or welfare of the Township.

Member Mattioni asked if the studies do not actually deal with 2 billboards opposite each other along a line. Mr. Tantala advised that the majority of the signs he studied are individual signs. Mr. Tantala stated that there are cases where 2 signs can be seen from one another. Mr. Tantala advised that he does not see any problems with the 2 proposed digital signs because there is no animation, no scrolling, and no flickering or flashing of light.

Member Mattioni asked if there is no increase in accidents when going from a static to a digital billboard. Mr. Tantala advised that there is no statistically significant increase in accidents. Mr. Tantala stated that this is based on a model that accumulates traffic accident data over a period of time. Member Mattioni asked if this was done for the site in question. Mr. Tantala advised that the model was not used for the applicant's property.

Member Saring asked how the 8 seconds for the changing of the image was derived. Mr. Tantala advised that he did not propose the 8 seconds for the location in question. Mr. Tantala stated that a lower transition time is actually permitted. Mr. Tantala advised that the interval is standardized so that equal spots on the sign can be sold.

Member Saring asked if there are federal standards for the display delay. Mr. Tantala advised that the Federal Highway Administration issued a memo that sets certain criteria to the States concerning ambient light and brightness.

Member Esposito asked if the 2007 memo was put out because of the Phase I Study done by the Federal Highway Commission, and this concerned eye glance on signs. Mr. Tantala advised that this is correct, and then the Phase II Study was done. Mr. Tantala stated that the duration for the digital signs was reviewed.

Member Esposito expressed concern on what a municipality does concerning safety.

Member Esposito asked if it is 8 seconds, 10 seconds, 1 minute, or what is the time standard. Mr. Tantala advised that the State sets its own standard. Mr. Tantala stated that the State has permitted billboards such as the billboards proposed by the applicant throughout the State.

Member Esposito noted that there does not seem to be any results from high glance studies. Mr. Tantala advised that there probably will never be results concerning this. Mr. Tantala stated that the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute did do a high glance study, however it has not been commissioned by the Federal Highway Commission.

Mr. Conroy asked why does the applicant need two billboard signs. Mr. Kelly advised that Septa is trying to maximize the revenues. Mr. Kelly stated that the PA Secretary of Transportation is aware of the proposal.

Mr. Conroy asked if there is a similar scenario in Southeast Pennsylvania concerning billboards on both sides of the highway. Mr. Manfredi advised that there is a similar setup along the PA Turnpike, and this exists throughout the United States.

Ms. Piette asked what zoning district do the variances requested pertain to. Mr. Kerns advised that the relief is for the Limited Industrial District.

Member Saring asked where else is Septa proposing the 2 billboards in Montgomery County. Mr. Kerns advised that the 2 billboard scenario is also being proposed in Whitmarsh Township. Mr. Kerns stated that Septa will not propose any more billboards in Plymouth Township.

Member Saring asked if Septa has spoken to Norfolk Southern Railroad concerning the proposal. Mr. Manfredi advised that the railroad has not been contacted.

Ms. Piette asked how close is the closest residential to the proposed billboards. Mr. Manfredi advised that the closest residential is over 1,500 feet away. Mr. Manfredi stated that the billboards will be 325 feet away from the sewer plant.

Member Sassi asked if the application was properly advertised. Mr. Conroy advised that the proper advertisement was done.

Mr. Kerns advised that the applicant will amend their application to have one sign instead of two signs. Mr. Kerns stated that this sign will be on the north side of the Turnpike.

There were no questions from the audience. There was no testimony for or against the applicant from the audience.

The Board discussed and decided as follows:

SEPTA: Member Saring made a motion that the variances requested be approved for the sign on the north side only subject to the following:

1) The testimony given this evening be complied with.

Member Mattioni seconded the motion. Members Saring, Mattioni, Sassi, and Frangiosa voted in favor of the motion. Member Esposito voted against the motion. The motion passed by the vote of 4-1.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard Clifford
Richard Clifford