

BUCKINGHAM TOWNSHIP

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PLANNING COMMISSION

AGENDA

FEBRUARY 1, 2023

Call to Order 7:30 p.m.

1. Annual Reorganization of Planning Commission
 - Appoint Chairman
 - Appoint Vice-Chairman
2. Consideration of approving draft Planning Commission minutes of December 7, 2022.
3. Pre-Submission Sketch Plan Application: "Old Easton Realty LLC -- Hyundai Dealership and Biotechnology Research Lab", 3739 Easton Road, TMP 06-004-002 and 06-004-003.

Buckingham Township Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Buckingham Township Planning Commission was held February 1, 2023 in the Township Building, 4613 Hughesian Drive, Buckingham, Pennsylvania.

Present:	Andrea Mehling	Chairperson
	Patrick Fowles	Vice Chairperson
	Rebecca Fink	Member
	Erling Salvesen, Jr.	Member
	Dr. Marc Sandberg	Member
	Louis Spadafora	Member
	Glenn Thomson	Member
	Dan Gray	Township Engineer
	Luke Rosanova	Bucks County Planning Commission

Mrs. Mehling called the regular meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Annual Reorganization of Planning Commission

- **Appoint Chairman**
- **Appoint Vice-Chairman**

Mr. Spadafora made a motion, seconded by Mr. Thomson, to appoint Andrea Mehling as Chairman. The motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Mehling made a motion, seconded by Dr. Sandberg, to appoint Patrick Fowles as Vice-Chairman. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration of approving the draft Planning Commission minutes of the December 7, 2022 meeting.

Mr. Fowles made a motion, seconded by Mr. Salvesen, to approve, as most recently presented, the draft Planning Commission meeting minutes of the December 7, 2022 Meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Pre-Submission Sketch Plan Application: “Old Easton Realty LLC – Hyundai Dealership and Biotechnology Research Lab”, 3739 Easton Road, TMP 06-004-002 and 06-004-003.

Ed Wild, Esq. and Mr. Greg Glitzer, Gilmore & Associates, were present to discuss the sketch plan. Mr. Wild explained this parcel is the Sylvan Pool property. He said they are requesting comments and recommendations prior to completing the engineered plan and making a formal submission to the township.

Mr. Glitzer said this plan was discussed by the Board of Supervisors recently during a work session, just to keep them current on the progress of developing the property. He said it will be filed as a Subdivision/Lot Line Change, as there are currently two tax parcels on the site.

Mr. Glitzer displayed a photo of the existing site, with frontage on Old Easton Road and Easton Road (Route 611). He explained there is a random industrial building on the site, piles of debris

and pallets, three curb cuts along Old Easton Road and a single entrance onto Easton Road, with the entire frontage behind a fence. He said the ground would be scraped clean and environmentally cleaned up.

Mr. Glitzer said they are proposing two lots, with lot 1 to be a new Hyundai dealership to include a large parking area, drive-through service ride up area, and storage spaces for inventory. He said lot 2 is configured along Old Easton Road, aligned with the newest addition of the PA Biotechnology Center. He said the lot is being designed for the next level of start-up businesses that need to stay near the nexus of the Center.

Mr. Glitzer explained that they anticipate taking advantage of the Cross Keys Overlay Zoning for lot 1 relative to lighting standards and relief of buffers, and also for the design of lot 2. Mr. Glitzer said the overlay zone requires public space, so they have configured the building on lot 2 with the front as a parkscape plaza continuing past the frontage of the building and merging into the streetscape, providing 6200 feet of amenity space. He said they also identified a covered gathering area, maybe designed as a small pavilion or gazebo, to be used as an outdoor lunch space integrated with a stormwater feature (i.e. recirculating stream). Mr. Glitzer said the gathering area would be located on a big island in the southern parking area located below the Biotechnology building. Mr. Glitzer said the overlay zone also provides flexibility to accommodate an inner connection between Easton and Old Easton Road.

Mr. Glitzer said they had received comments from the Landscape Review Committee and tried to incorporate some of the items at this stage with buffering, as site lines show visibility from Easton Road to Old Easton Road. He said that Ms. Manicone had suggested using a retaining wall (which will be required to accommodate the grade change between the lots) as a green wall to be planted with cascading plants. He said the wall would not have a steep vertical face, but would be lower in the front, and would vary from 4' to about 7' at the top.

Mr. Glitzer said the Bucks County Planning Commission had commented that areas on the plan must be designated for their intended use, so on the Hyundai lot the parking areas have been identified as service parking, employee parking, and a double parked inventory lot in the rear.

Mr. Wild noted that the process of buying one or both of these properties started five years ago, and the Beans Organization is now the record owner. He said that they had to lease the site back to Sylvan Pools for a year from closing, and Sylvan Pools will be moving to leased space in the Cross Keys Shopping Center fairly soon for the office use, and by October 2024 for operational purposes.

Mr. Thomson asked if there was minor industrial or hazardous materials on the site, and Mr. Glitzer said they have an environmental consultant working on it. Mr. Wild said they had identified certain hotspots outside the old coping shop that were paint related. Mr. Gray said the information had been provided to the township. Mrs. Fink said she hoped that trees would grow. Mr. Spadafora asked if there would be some green space as there is none there currently, and Mr. Glitzer said the impervious surface ratio is currently 89.6%, and drops down to 77.5% on lot 1, and almost 69% on lot 2. Mr. Wild said the site is a registered nonconforming existing ratio. Mr. Glitzer summarized that they are creating 1-1/4 acre additional green space across the site.

Mrs. Mehling asked if there would be a cut-through from Lot 2 to Route 611, perhaps using the old driveway that is there. Mr. Glitzer confirmed there is a driveway passing through the bottom of the lot that may be advantageous for emergency services or a truck entering the site from the wrong way.

Mrs. Mehling asked where the trucks/car carriers are supposed to enter, and Mr. Glitzer said they would enter from Easton Road and circulate to the left of the building. Mrs. Fink asked if trucks could navigate the turn, and Mr. Glitzer said yes, adding that they will be providing turning templates to the township.

Mrs. Fink asked if the use of lot 2 will help with the need for space by the Biotechnology Center, and Mr. Glitzer said they had consulted with the Biotechnology Center on the “research use” features (which is an allowable use in the overlay district) and may design the building with that use in mind. Mr. Gray said the overlay district provides an opportunity for mixed use within the building, including day care, medical, vet office, etc., which may each require different parking configurations as specified by the zoning ordinance. Mr. Glitzer said that would be good to document on the plan. Mr. Gray said there are many complimentary uses to the research use. Mrs. Mehling asked if the Biotechnology Center owns lot 2, and Mr. Glitzer replied no, Old Easton Realty is the partnership at this time.

Mr. Gray confirmed that the previous sketch plan discussions included using stormwater from one lot to another, with cross agreements. Mr. Glitzer agreed, saying the stormwater drains to lot 1.

He asked what would happen on lot 2 if the Beans Organization completed their parcel work first, and lot 1 construction was delayed. Mr. Gray said his concern was that lot 2 may be used for overflow parking on a temporary case and added the township would not want it to be an undeveloped lot. Mr. Gray said the township would require buffer plantings if lot 2 was to be used for overflow parking, rather than being developed as shown on the LD plans.

Mr. Glitzer said the lots would be presented on a joint plan for approvals, with staging for construction of lot 1 first. Mr. Thomson asked the timetable, and Mr. Wild said Fred Beans wants it built yesterday. Mr. Wild explained the process of car dealers, saying the manufacturer has a say in how the building is built; the design both interior and exterior. Mrs. Fink asked how this would work with the overlay district architectural design specifics, and Mr. Wild said the architect would be very hands on and would do the best he could, but there is limited flexibility.

Mrs. Fink asked about lighting, saying they are still trying to keep a fairly dark sky in Buckingham. Mr. Wild said lighting has improved dramatically over the past 10-15 years with the development of LED lights, a reduced height of light standards, timers set for dimming; however they do need security safety lighting. Mr. Gray said light controllers can be set to dim at a specific time and motion detectors will turn it up if motion is detected. He said the Mercedes dealership across Easton Road uses these.

Mr. Rosanova said the Bucks County Planning Commission Cross Keys Study shows connector roads at the Wawa site and proposed on this site, and also requested walking connectivity between Easton and Old Easton Road (whether a sidewalk or dedicated trail). Mr. Glitzer said in discussion

with the Board of Supervisors, they had shared the same request, and while they do have a crosswalk planned over Old Easton Road, they cannot accommodate a full roadway cut through the property. He said they could design the crosswalk with bump outs, and possibly install a second one towards the southern end of the existing Biotechnology Center. Mr. Glitzer said they could look at a pedestrian or bike path through the property. Mr. Fowles asked if they could install a road from Old Easton that would connect to the parking lot of the existing adjacent shopping center. Mr. Glitzer said that gets complicated as the shopping center is Plumstead Township, has a bit of wetness in the upper back corner and the parking lot does not go clear to the property line, however he added it may be worth looking into.

Mrs. Mehling asked if there was any way to walk in front of the new dealership, and Mr. Gray said due to grade drops and a drainage culvert, there is not a nice clean path available. Mr. Gray added that any type a mid-block crosswalk on Easton Road would also be challenging as the road is 4-5 lanes and would require PennDOT approval, however he added a traffic study will show if it is feasible.

Dr. Sandberg asked if they had a plan for electric chargers onsite, and requested the number and type of stations, including the kW, and would they be available to the public. Mr. Gray said there are no township requirements for this service. Mr. Glitzer said they would get answers to these questions.

Dr. Sandberg asked if the public amenity discussed for lot 2 would be used only by the persons leasing the building and working at the dealership, or would it be available for use by the public. Mr. Glitzer said he would think it could be public and may be a nice place to eat lunch. Ms. Manicone agreed, adding that the public amenity is being designed in a very unique way, as it will tie into the stormwater facilities in some way, have a pergola or some type of structure, benches for persons, a planted swale to incorporate appropriate rain garden plantings, and bigger plantings including street trees.

Ms. Manicone said the township worked closely with the Mercedes dealership across Easton Road in the perimeter buffer plans, and worked to keep the front of the property open for sales vehicles but also provided screening between the properties. She said certain areas of this new site will need to be screened, however she is excited to see a streetscape starting to happen, with a coordination of species creating a deliberate planted effect.

Mr. Glitzer said they would proceed with the plan and return to the Planning Commission to report and discuss their progress along the way.

Mr. Fowles made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Fink, to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 8:40 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lori Wicen.

Minutes approved by Planning Commission on May 3, 2023.