Lower Salford Township

Planning Commission Meeting

May 28, 2025

Planning Commission Vice Chair Julia Hurle called to order the Lower Salford Township Planning Commission meeting at 7:30pm. Other Planning Commission members in attendance were Joe Harwanko, David Goodman, David Bowe, Scott Bamford, and Terry Crippen. Also in attendance was Mike Beuke, Director of Building and Zoning; Michele Fountain, P.E. of CKS, the Township Engineer's office; and Claire Warner of the Montgomery County Planning. Stephanie Butler, P.E. of Bowman, the Township Traffic Engineer, attended via Zoom. Chair Manus McHugh was excused from the meeting.

Minutes

The minutes of the April 23, 2025, meeting were reviewed. Mr. Goodman made the motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Crippen.

Motion 6 Yes; 0 No

130 Christopher Lane – Amended Final Land Development

Present to review the application was Susan Rice, P.E. of S.T.A. Engineering.

Two review letters were prepared, one from Michele Fountain, P.E. of CKS Engineers dated 4/10/2025, one from Stephanie Butler, P.E. of Bowman dated 5/14/2025.

Ms. Rice stated that a note was added to the plan for the signage and she reminded the members about the three waiver requests.

There being no concerns or public comments, Ms. Hurle asked for a motion to recommend approval. A motion was made by Mr. Bowe and seconded by Mr. Harwanko.

Motion 6 Yes; 0 No

488 Harleysville Pike – Preliminary/Final Plan

Present to review the application was Christen Pionzio, Esquire of HRMML and Chirag Thakkar, P.E., of ARNA Engineering; they were joined by Larry Dugan and Bill Briegel of JP Orleans Builders and Jeff Todd of Traffic Planning and Design.

Two review letters were prepared, one by Michele Fountain, P.E. of CKS Engineers, dated 5/21/2025, one by Stephanie Butler, P.E. of Bowman dated 5/22/2025.

Ms. Pionzio noted that the applicant is here tonight for the fifth time, the second time seeking a recommendation for approval.

Ms. Pionzio discussed the fence, trees, PennDOT approval and piping.

Mr. Todd noted the PennDOT HOP permit application was submitted three weeks ago. He also announced that the shoulder on Harleysville Pike will be 6’ wide along the site frontage, the PennDOT review letter is expected to arrive on Friday, and the center turn lane is not warranted but will be installed.

Ms. Hurle clearly stated that the PennDOT review letter must be in hand before the application can receive a recommendation.

Ms. Fountain discussed grading.

Ms. Butler noted a discrepancy between the land development plans and the HOP submission.

Ms. Fountain pointed out changes made to the grading and the SWM.

Ms. Pionzio discussed moving PECO poles and the associated expense to the applicant.

Mr. Bamford questioned the landscape plan, particularly the proposed berm being removed from the plan.

Ms. Pionzio stated that, in contrast to the previous discussion, the developer now has no plan to alter the existing fence.

Ms. Butler discussed the HOP plan, particularly the intersection, striping, and shoulder widths on both sides of SR 113.

During public comment, Alan Duddy of Cheswyck Drive discussed the need for the fence to be replaced, his concern of the hazards of Harleysville Pike left turn lane, tree replacement, elimination of trees, and the proposed snow storage area.

Robert Menges of Oaklyn Avenue voiced his concerns regarding the dangers of the turn lane, danger to cyclists, the need for a shoulder for emergency pull off, well water effects, and the need for public water connections on Meetinghouse Road.

Colleen Shronk of Windsor Drive spoke about her concerns regarding Harleysville Pike, the time the traffic study was completed, tractor-trailer traffic, and car headlights shining into homes.

Lori Yamashita of Wexford Circle discussed the PennDOT submission and the data collection from 2022 during COVID. She inquired about discrepancies between the land development plan and the HOP, the fence, concerns for blasting, increase in the number of waiver requests, and site triangles.

Joe Davide of Wexford Circle inquired about trees, the fence, and walking path.

Mr. Goodman reminded the applicant that the fence was still an open item at the conclusion of their last appearance.

Diane Turco of Meetinghouse Road discussed safety concerns for cyclists, driveway location, use of existing driveway, overabundance of proposed homes, and the need for a berm for privacy.

Edward Coates of Meetinghouse Road voiced concerns about blasting damage to existing homes, and wells.

Ron Patterson of Cheswyck Drive voiced concerns about traffic, noise, the proximity of the road to his home, and the site triangle.

Debra Heldt of Wexford Circle inquired about the blasting and damage to the existing homes, the fence, and the path location.

Bette Duddy of Cheswyck Drive commented on safety, privacy, security, replacement trees, berm and privacy fence, Harleysville Pike, basin slopes, Cheswyck sign, and bike safety.

Responding to the public’s comments, Ms. Pionzio stated that a blasting survey has not been done and that she does not anticipate the need for blasting.

Kerry Lewis of Windsor Drive stated that, according to his property survey, the fence is one foot in from the property line on the 488 Harleysville Pike property.

Ms. Butler, addressing the sight triangle concerns, noted that there may be one or two trees in the sight triangle, but the Cheswyck sign is not. Ms. Butler also indicated that the required egressing sight distance (different from the sight triangle) is adequate. There may also be some existing vegetation that will need to be removed or trimmed. Ms. Butler then provided information on the traffic study and left turn lanes.

Mr. Bamford reminded the audience that PennDOT chose the entrance location; Ms. Butler noted that she still has concerns with the scope of improvements.

Ms. Hurle acknowledged the concerns with Harleysville Pike as valid and again stated that the Commission must be in receipt of the PennDOT review to move forward. She also acknowledged that concerns for privacy, run-off, and the fence, and notified the applicant that there would be no recommendation without the PennDOT review. She instructed the applicant to investigate the site triangle concerns, the impact on the neighbors, and the fence and return after they receive the PennDOT review.

Mr. Goodman let the applicant know that the cost of this project to the applicant is not a Township issue.

531 Main Street/Clemens Mills Subdivision

Present to review the application on behalf of the applicant was Rick Mast, P.E. of RCMA. Three review letters were prepared, one by Michele Fountain, P.E. of CKS Engineers, dated 5/22/2025, one by Stephanie Butler of Bowman dated 5/22/2025, and one from Claire Warner of MCPC dated 5/27/2025.

Mr. Mast presented a brief overview of the project to date and informed the Commission that the property is under agreement with a new developer. He addressed the steep embankment, private road, connection to the Garis property driveway, and explained that the PennDOT permit has expired but he does not expect any issues with renewing it. He explained the pedestrian connection and informed the Commission he will be speaking with some residents of Pioneer Circle regarding the connection. He clarified that some trees may need to be removed but they will be replaced, and he is proposing new street trees along the street frontage. The waivers he may seek are mostly regarding the roadway.

Ms. Butler discussed her concerns with the access, horizontal radius, and steep grade, stating the maximum slope and minimum radius is not a good combination.

Ms. Fountain discussed the outlet pipe.

Mr. Bowe asked about run-off from the steep slope onto the roadway and asked if they had considered reducing the number of proposed units.

A discussion took place regarding the units; it was noted that they are proposed to be 20’x50’, two-story buildings with walkout basements. The existing building will be sold separately and will not be part of the necessary HOA.

Mr. Mast noted that some Pioneer Circle properties have fences that are in the easement.

Ms. Warner, addressing her review letter, discussed the variety of trees, the steep slope, HOA, and pedestrian connectivity.

Mr. Mast will obtain the PennDOT permit and meet with the necessary Pioneer Circle residents.

No action was taken on this application.

All additional public comments addressed the 488 Harleysville Pike application. Mr. Duddy inquired about the proposed streetlights and does not find them to be necessary.

Mr. Goodman explained the lights are useful and necessary.

Mr. Menges of Oaklyn Avenue inquired about the effect of the blasting on his home and water supply.

Mr. Beuke gave a brief explanation on how blasting and the blasting permits are managed.

Mr. Beuke briefly touched on the topic of Waiver of Land Development/Small Projects; a brief discussion ensued, and the discussion will resume at another meeting.

Lori Yamashita thanked staff for their assistance.

There being no additional public comment, Mr. Bowe made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Harwanko seconded the motion. With all members in favor, the meeting adjourned at 9:46pm.

The next meeting of the Planning Commission is scheduled for 7:30pm on Wednesday June 25, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Reimel

Administrative Assistant