

**COOLBAUGH TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION MINUTES
May 4, 2021**

The work session was called to order by Chairman William Weimer at 6:00pm via the Zoom Virtual Media App.

Board Members present:

William Weimer, Anthony Lamantia, Clare Colgan, Lynn Kelly and Alma I. Ruiz-Smith

Board Members absent:

None

Staff present:

Patrick Armstrong, Township Solicitor, Erin Masker, Township Secretary and Meredith Thompson, Business Manager

Staff absent:

None

**1. Discussion on Request to Change the Zoning District for Development- Sarah Bue Morris
Property located on Memorial Blvd in the area of Prospect Street)**

Engineer Sarah Bue Morris was in attendance and discussed the proposed project located at the corner of Route 423 and 611 owned by Lynch Corporation. She stated that the property is being purchased by Pinnacle Hoods for the purpose of building a warehouse, a truck stop and a hotel. Ms. Bue Morris stated that lot #2 is an L shaped lot which will have the hotel at the northern part of the property, stating that the hotel and the parking lot will also be an L shaped, it is unknown the number of rooms that will be in the hotel at this point but it has been designed with 150 parking spots. The other portion of the lot will be the location of the truck stop with 65 truck parking spots and will also include a 12,000 sq. ft. restaurant and fueling station. She stated that it is located around several residential lots. There is an existing cell tower on a separate piece of property. Ms. Ruiz-Smith stated that she has been working with the property owner on this for four years and asked if the entrance will be Seven Mile Road, being advised it will not, the hotel entrance will be Route 611 and the truck stop has entrances from Route 611 and Route 423. Ms. Bue Morris stated that the Distribution Center that is proposed on Lot #4 will have an entrance from Route 423. Ms. Bue Morris stated she would prefer a larger building for the distribution center but that would impede on the required 100' buffer from the stream. Ms. Ruiz-Smith asked if these will be three distinct entities being advised that is correct, a hotel, a restaurant and a truck stop. Ms. Bue Morris stated that a hotel is a permitted use in a C-3 zoning district and is requesting that the zoning ordinance be changed to allow a truck stop and a distribution center as a special exception.

- **Discussion:** Ms. Kelly stated that the idea of a C-3 zoning district was to combine commercial friendly businesses with the residential that is already there. She stated that a truck stop and a distribution center are not residential friendly. She asked how they will be able to put in an on-lot septic with the wetlands stating that there is no township sewer servicing those lots and stated that with the stream located behind the proposed distribution center, there will be an issue with sewer lines being run to that property. She stated that there is also the concern of the fuel so close to the creek, which the Board is aware of issues in the past. Ms. Kelly stated she doesn't believe that a distribution center in the back yards of Township residents is a good idea. She also stated that she has concerns with the traffic patterns that are proposed. Trucks are already being redirected through residential areas and are damaging the roads and adversely affecting our residents. She does not disagree that the township needs a truck stop, but stated that maybe lot 4 would be a better location for it. There are other lots that are zoned industrial which would allow for

a truck stop/travel plaza and stated she is not in favor of changing the zoning. When asked if there are any buyers currently, the Board was advised by representatives from Pinnacle Hood that they have been in talks with Holiday Inn and Best Western for the hotel, TA and Loves for the truck stop and multiple logistics companies for the distribution center. Ms. Kelly stated she is concerned with the quality of life for our residents, stating that the zoning was designed to protect their backyards. Ms. Ruiz-Smith stated that the township is working to sell the WWTP stating that there is a strategic plan in place for central utilities. Ms. Kelly asked where is the plan for the sewer lines. Mr. Lamantia stated that he would like more information on the project before stating his concerns as the Board just received the plans today and Ms. Colgan stated that due to her employment with a truck plaza she will refrain from asking any questions until she also has more information. Discussion ensued about the difference between a warehouse vs. a distribution center and a truck plaza vs. a truck stop. Township Engineer, Russell Kresge stated that a travel plaza and a truck stop are the same thing in the ordinance. Solicitor Armstrong stated that a warehouse is more extensive and intensive than a distribution center. Mr. Weimer stated that a Walmart or Amazon would be considered DC's as opposed to other smaller storage warehouses. Solicitor Armstrong stated that the Board would have to consider the location of all the C3 zoning areas in the township to be sure that the requested change will not be an issue in the other areas. He stated that the request for change to special exception in a C3 would go before the Zoning Hearing Board and there would be specific conditions put on the approval. Mr. Weimer stated that there are some strong opinions on the concerns with the sewer with Ms. Bue Morris stating that she was hoping to speak to the Township or the new owner about expanding the WWTP. Mr. Weimer stated that development is the way of change, just because the town has been this way doesn't mean it has to stay this way. He stated we have to make change within the scope of the law. Mr. Weimer asked that if any Board member has any questions that they send them to Ms. Masker to forward on to Ms. Bue Morris. Representatives from Pinnacle Hoods stated that there is a need for a truck stop due to the number of trucks parking on the road and number of warehouses in the community, asking what they can do to combat the concerns. They asked if added buffers may be an option, stating that they want to work to achieve a happy way to work this out and be a good neighbor. Township Engineer, Russell Kresge stated that a traffic signal at the location of the driveways may be warranted. Attorney Michelin stated this should be looked at as the beginning of the process and gives the Township the most participation by adding the use as a special exception. Adding the uses as a special exception doesn't automatically approve the project, it just allows it to move forward to the next step and be able to address all issues with the conditions including but not limited to sewage and traffic concerns. Ms. Bue Morris stated that another option would be for the uses to be added as a conditional use which would give the Board of Supervisors total control. Ms. Ruiz-Smith stated that we wanted this, found a developer that is will to make this happen with a much needed travel plaza, family priced hotel that the township would benefit from and a distribution center that would be a value to economic development and bring employment to the community. D. Pope agrees with Ms. Kelly, stating that the hotel and the travel plaza should be moved stating that Prospect Street is not a good place for truck traffic. Developer, Pinnacle Hoods stated that they are buying the property and didn't believe that they were imposing on anyone's homes and that they were attracted to the area. He stated that he purchased a property in Lake Wallenpaupack and stated that he would see all the trucks parked along the highway for drivers to rest along his travels and stated that he believed the 120 acre property would be a perfect location, stating he is willing to listen to the Board's suggestions and be a good neighbor. Ms. Ruiz-Smith asked if a warehouse wasn't agreed upon, would the developer consider senior housing, being advised that they would. Ms. Kelly suggested moving the truck plaza to lot 4 and the senior housing to lot 3, stating that less people would be affected. Alan from Pinnacle Hoods stated that would not be a problem. Ms. Ruiz-Smith stated that there is a demand in the community for it and it would be a permitted use on the property.

2. Discussion on Recycling Center Fees

Mr. Weimer stated that we have significant expenses from the Beast and stated the Mr. Knecht and Ms. Thompson reached out to neighboring municipalities and created the proposed fee schedule that is before you this evening. Landscape companies are beating down the doors at the compost facility and the \$750.00 that we charged for the commercial compost pass will not cover the costs incurred. He stated that we could refund the payments that were made by landscape companies and move forward with the fees that are proposed. He stated that we will be providing a touchless POS when the facility reopens and residents will still need to show their proof of residency when bringing items in. Mr. Weimer stating we are working on a grant to replace the beast and stated that we may need to look into renting one when the yard opens to get us through. Ms. Ruiz-Smith stated that based on the expenses we won't even be at a breakeven point. She stated that she agrees with charging those that use it, the same way we need to implement the sewer increase for those that use the system instead of every resident of the township having to pay for something they aren't using. Mr. Weimer reviewed the proposed changes and stated that he would be in favor of refunding the three contractors that paid for the commercial permit. D. Pope asked when the facility will be reopening with Mr. Weimer stated that he is anticipating June 1st. Discussion ensued on the steps being taken to clean up the electronics that are currently at the facility and Mr. Weimer stated that he would consider beginning to collect them again at the July 9th bulk drop off.

3. Other Business

Ms. Colgan stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission have been reviewing the request from Mr. Nick Lipinski, Primal Sounds Production requesting to rent the skate park, a field or a pavilion to hold a music event for 50-75 people. Parks met with him at their meeting and after the discussion that was held at the Parks meeting, they will not be recommending approval of the request. Ms. Colgan stated that if the Board would like more information it could be put on the next work session with Mr. Weimer agreeing.

4. Public Comment

Nothing was heard.

Work Session ended at 7:12pm.